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See also No. 45, "Retrospect and Revival
in Gazaland."

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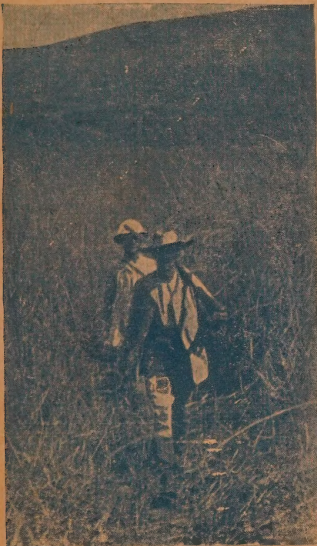
South Africa General Mission,
Booklet Series, No. 48.



Advance in Gazaland

The Continued Story
of Revival

COMPILED BY
BESSIE PORTER HEAD.



TREKKING IN GAZALAND.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

“ I planted and Apollos watered ; but it was God Who was, all the time, giving the increase. So that neither the planter nor the waterer is of any importance. God Who gives the increase is all in all. Now, in aim and purpose the planter and waterer are one ; and yet each will receive his own special reward answering to his own special work.”

1 Cor. iii. 6-8 (*Weymouth's translation*).



NOTE.—Readers of this story are earnestly urged in giving of thanks, to persevere in prayer (1) for Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Hatch, Mr. and Mrs. Rees Howells, (2) all native helpers, (3) every native Christian.

October, 1916.

FOREWORD.

IN sending out the second Gazaland booklet, it may be well to mention one or two matters connected with the work there, for the benefit of those who have not read the former booklet, "Retrospect and Revival."

The pioneer Missionaries to Gazaland were Messrs. Dudley Kidd, Raney, and Coupland, who entered and claimed the land for Christ in 1897, Mr. Coupland laying down his life there within a very short time. The sphere of work in Southern Rhodesia is very large, bordering on, and now, we trust, extending into Portuguese East Africa.

The name of the Station which is such a centre of life and power is "Rusitu," about 24 miles from Melsetter, where reside the four devoted Missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Hatch and Mr. and Mrs. Howells. The two former have laboured for many years there, truly "sowing in tears" the Seed of Life with patience and prayer. The two latter now helping them to "reap with joy" a great harvest which is being gathered in by the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God. It is altogether to *His* praise that the S.A.G.M. desire to record a further account of the work of grace which has been in progress in that vast district, and which is still continuing. We would earnestly suggest that a copy of "Retrospect and Revival in Gazaland" be procured before reading the following pages.

B. P. H.



Preparing the Way for Advance.



ADVANCE IN GAZALAND.

WHAT can two old women do, O Lord?"
Such was the eager question sent up to God by two old native women at Rusitu "whose hearts God had touched" during the early stages of the Revival.* God gave the answer in sending them forth filled with His Holy Spirit, and as they went to tell the good news to those who were still untaught, they met one or two of the Native Evan-

* See "Retrospect and Revival in Gazaland." An unfinished story.

gelists, who were out on a similar tour, and went with them. On the return of the little band to the Mission Station, they could tell of thirty-two who had turned to God.

In these wonderful times of blessing in Gazaland, God is proving that none are too old and none too young to be His witnesses amongst the heathen; and it is indeed with praise and thanksgiving to Him, we can say the beautiful story of the working of His Spirit is not yet finished, but is still fascinating in the revelations of His power to save those who have been sitting in the darkness till now. The hearts of our four Missionaries at Rusitu are filled with gratitude to the God of all grace for permitting them to see the answers to their prayers, and the results of faith in a "God who worketh for him that waiteth. . . ."

This second chapter of the story of the Revival may take shape rather in extracts from letters received from our Workers on the spot, as these tell in simple, graphic words of the *facts* which are before their eyes and convey a vivid impression of the work of the Holy Spirit.

We would ask friends who have read "Retrospect and Revival" to refer to it, and thus let the first part of the story be linked on in thought with this further record, so that a consecutive conception of the work may be retained. The outpouring of the Spirit there recorded was not to be allowed

to come unchallenged by the Adversary. We were therefore not surprised to hear in January (1916) that a little persecution was already arising and faith being tested. It is not needful to give details, but these tests only served to prove the reality and depth of His work in hearts, and glory was brought to His name thereby, for the "meek and lowly" spirit evidenced by the tested ones was truly the Spirit of Christ.

Also in January Mr. Howells writes of people coming from 100 and 115 miles distant, having heard of the work on the Station, and of the wonderful way God met and blessed them.

He says :—

"The blessing has spread : we have heard of blessing 45 miles south and 55 miles north. The Lord has healed the sick, sanctified believers, saved the unconverted, and answered scores of prayers. Eight men have volunteered as evangelists, and three girls as teachers, and others as Bible-women. The Native Evangelist and his wife, who had laboured at Mhakwe (the out-station) for years, and had only known of one convert, came over to Rusitu and received the Holy Spirit so truly that on their return to Mhakwe twenty were converted, and we hear of similar results elsewhere."

Numbers of the boys who had been away working in the towns came back to the district, and in answer to the prayers of their own people the Spirit began to work amongst them. In the school also the increase of scholars has been so rapid that temporary buildings have had to be put up to accommodate the numbers that came from great distances. As there was famine in the land it was a venture of faith to take these scholars (mealies—Indian corn—had gone up from 8/- to 25/- a bag), and from the human standpoint the outlook was difficult; but “that does not change God; we preach faith, and have to expect testing.”

As an instance of how God responds to faith, we find in a letter written some months afterwards that there were 110 scholars on the register, and Mr. Howells writes: “To teach them is the best work I have ever done in my life.”

Perhaps there are few greater opportunities for the ultimate spread of the Gospel in the land than in school work, and especially under such circumstances as are existing in Rusitu, where the teachers are true Christians, testifying by life as well as lip to the truths and power of Christianity. These scholars from far-off districts will return, we trust, to their homes filled with love to the Lord Jesus, and set on fire by the Spirit with a burning desire to tell of Him to their own people. If each of these became a Christian teacher in

districts far removed from Rusitu, how would the Lord's Name be glorified in the conversion of the heathen! Shall we not pray earnestly for this?

But possibly the most potent factor in winning the country for Christ lies in the training and work of the Native Evangelists. As mentioned before, in January we knew of eight men being trained as a result of the earlier Revival movement; but as, by God's grace, this movement spread, seventeen had joined the Evangelists' Training Class by April, and already there have been remarkable results following their preaching trips. These men were to have six weeks' training and then go out two and two for six weeks' evangelising, the desire of the Missionaries being that every kraal in the land should hear the Message of Life. It must not be forgotten that some of these men had had Christian teaching *before* the Holy Spirit's special visitation, and therefore were prepared more quickly than others for the work, and in fact two had gone out before the training class was started, and the native people who heard them, say "they preach like lions"—meaning that there is so much fearless boldness and power. Some six or eight of these men had returned from a six weeks' preaching tour when our Missionaries wrote in April and May, and the accounts were truly Pentecostal. In one instance two had gone into Portuguese (East Africa) territory, and found a chief

there who had been spending money on "rain doctors" to bring the rain which was so terribly needed. The Evangelists told the people of the Living God, who alone could give rain, and their talk ended in a prayer meeting. When they began to pray, there was no sign of rain, and it had not rained for weeks; it seemed like the test of Elijah on Mount Carmel, and with similar result, for before the Evangelists had finished prayer the rain came pouring down, and the heathen declared at once which was the "Living God." The Evangelists were asked to come back again (for they were going much farther), and they did so, and after their preaching on this return visit the chief jumped up and said he repented and wanted to follow the Lord and be a Christian, and over 200 of his people testified in this way. Of course, we do not say that all these heathen people were truly converted there and then, but the incident is told as an evidence of *how* God is working, and we are sure that into some of these dark souls the true Light did shine.

Mr. Hatch writes :—

"Since then we have had a note from two other Evangelists mentioning 320 as standing when the invitation was given to come to Christ. These two had not met the others, and knew nothing of what had taken place with them. Again Changwangu's wife and two small boys went

into Portuguese territory a round trip of about 160 miles, and twenty-eight professed conversion in her meetings. Eight of these far-distant converts have come to school and are making good progress. I am just reporting results. . . . One thing is certain—that God is working and giving the Gospel to the masses through these trips.” Another letter (from Mr. Howells) says:—

“These Evangelists are like Stephen—full of the Holy Ghost and of power. Think of the result of their first preaching tour. Between eight of them they counted over 700 converts. We need faith to believe this, as it needs faith to believe that 5,000 were converted at Pentecost. But why should we limit the Holy Spirit’s power? I am positive, if we hold on to God, He will give us the hundred-fold.”

God has life and power to bestow on wholly yielded men and women, old and young, in Gazaland as well as elsewhere, whom He can equip for “the work of an Evangelist” to His glory.

We desire to press upon the hearts of friends of the S.A.G.M. that God is giving us all a really marvellous opportunity now to co-operate with the Holy Spirit in the evangelisation of this great territory. If there be now twenty native men either in training or already out doing this work

of witnessing for Christ, are *we* at the home base ready to support them in their "labour of love"? Surely we cannot let this opportunity pass without having a definite share in such work. It is quite impossible for our Missionaries to support twenty evangelists, besides teachers and Bible-women, and 110 scholars in their schools! Yet how often we at home, when we pray for blessing and advancement in the work in Africa (*and when God gives the blessing*), forget that *we* also must "advance" in sacrifice and gifts. May we not now look for many in the homeland who will take up the support of Evangelists and teachers or scholars in Africa, so that no undue burden may rest upon our Missionaries in that great field?

At a Conference held rather recently at Rusitu, the Holy Spirit again worked mightily. Many came from long distances, and we hear:—

"The church was crowded and the singing like that of the Welsh Revival, and the Holy Ghost filled the place. The Spirit came in such power that the people were broken down at once. One boy, who had said for months that he wanted to be an 'angel of Satan,' and with whom we could do nothing, gave his heart to Jesus the very last night. . . . Another boy who had always refused to become a Christian also stood up that last night and gave himself to Christ."



Native Carriers in Gazaland. (See *page 15*).

These are amongst the many incidents of deep blessing resulting from these gatherings. We hear that the general meetings at the Station are "as good as ever. . . . It is like a continual Revival, and the Holy Spirit getting the people ready for the Lord's Coming." What more glorious news could we expect?

God has been using the medical knowledge gained by Mr. Howells at Livingstone College, and the training taken by his wife. Much suffering has been relieved and lives have been saved through the instrumentality of both His servants. To give an instance: There were eight cases of pneumonia to which medical care and nursing were being given, and seven of these recovered. Pneumonia is so often fatal in Africa that this was very remarkable. The one man who died had come back from the town where he had been working on hearing of the Revival, and had surrendered wholly to God and received the filling of the Spirit. He had been noted for the great power and boldness he had in testimony.

"Every penny he had he gave to the work, not even keeping the £1 for the yearly tax; and at the Conference, when a man received blessing who had no coat, this Spirit-filled man gave his best coat to the other."

Quoting again from Mr. Howells:—

"His last testimony was this: He called his wife and

11 said he was going to meet the Lord, and that she should not cry—they would meet in Heaven; then said good-bye to all who were round him, and the next moment he was in the Lord's Presence. We can only say, 'The fruit was ripe, and the Angel plucked it,' . . . though we did not like the thought of losing this man, it has been a great blessing to Rusitu. The heathen are so much afraid of death that his last testimony will mean more to the heathen than much preaching. There were crowds of them in the service this morning, and one and another of the Christians took up this man's testimony as their subject, and we had a very wonderful meeting and sense of the Lord's Presence. This was the first case of death since the Revival began, and he has preached more by his death than he would ever have done in his life."

Mr. Howells adds how very grateful the people are for the gift by a friend at home of a *dispensary*, which will prove a tremendous help on the Mission Station.

The latest accounts from Rusitu are the most remarkable of all, and ring out again the challenge of our word-motto for this year—"Advance!" In a long letter from Mr. Howells dated July 1st, he gives a most graphic account of the trip just taken by Mr. and Mrs. Hatch and Mr. and Mrs. Howells.

The four servants of God felt that they were called of the Spirit to undertake an evangelising tour into Portuguese East Africa, and we read :—

“There is not a single Missionary (except at the coast) in all this vast region; and it is truly the stronghold of Satan. On the 1st of June, thirty-one of us started out on this trip, the party being made up of twenty-three boys (men), four girls, and the four Missionaries. We started with great expectations, as men going to war, and ‘the Cross of Jesus going on before.’ ”

The Holy Spirit led them through the country into the many kraals where the Name of the Lord Jesus had never been heard, and the descriptions given in detail (too numerous to mention) of the working of the Blessed Spirit are quite apostolic. For example :—

“We gathered the people for service, and while we preached the people were spellbound under the convicting power of the Holy Ghost, and before we had finished some of them were on their feet declaring that they wished to leave Satan and serve the Living God, and that they wanted Eternal Life. We were taken by surprise, and thought the people had not understood; but ‘the Breaker had come up before’ (Micah ii. 13). . . . That same

evening, in another place, all the people who had gathered to hear stood up and confessed their sin of worshipping the spirits, and now wanted to turn to God. There was quite a revival meeting, testimonies and prayers from our own Christian natives, who made the forest ring till late into the night with the songs of Zion. . . . We visited the kraals of thirteen chiefs, four of whom were absent, but the other nine gathered their people for the services."

Mr. Howells describes how the Holy Spirit convicted the peoples everywhere of sin, and showed them how their fear of death and of evil spirits, etc., resulted from sin. As the Missionaries or native Christians preached to the heathen the power of God was so great that groups of the people would stand up and confess that Satan had deceived them, and that they lived in bondage and fear. The evangelising party walked for twenty-four days, often under burning sun, and "enduring hardships like good soldiers of Jesus Christ" preaching in the kraals. The results appear marvellous, but we must remember that all the twenty-seven native carriers were also witnesses and preachers, and what could not God do with such a company? We hear that the *nine chiefs* already mentioned and "*Over twelve*" hundred people stood up, confessing sin, and thanking the Missionaries for coming to tell them of a

Saviour and of the way of Life, and that they had decided to serve the Lord Jesus. . . . Then we would all kneel down and pray together."

How mighty is the power of God! And how wonderfully gracious He has been to His servants at Rusitu to give them this great privilege and opportunity of taking the Bread of Life and the Water of Life to these hungry and thirsty souls. This Portuguese territory has been almost a closed land hitherto, and now God has set before us "an open door," which none can shut. Are we going to enter in and possess the land for Christ, or are we going to let this unprecedented opportunity slip? Mr. Howells writes :—

"At present there is a chance for an opening that may never occur again in our lifetime. In this district of the S.A.G.M. there is only one farm, and this is now for sale, as the present owner is leaving the country; but his price is outside the reach of a Mission, but the Lord could bring this down. From this centre all our district could be worked, and we could reach thousands of people, and the Portuguese authorities would not interfere. If some one of the Lord's stewards would invest in this, it would bring in the hundredfold. Just think of those 1,200 who wanted the Gospel, and yet not a single person had ever been to carry the Evangel to them."

It has not been easy to take simply *extracts* from letters, all of which are full of interest, but the quotations given are sufficient to show how mightily God is continuing to work, and will surely prove an incentive to prayer and praise. The chief objective of this little booklet is that it may be a fresh call to increasing prevailing prayer and intercession—for, after all, it contains the records of answered prayers. Our Missionaries gave themselves to waiting on God in the first instance, and numbers of His people at home were also looking to Him to send revival in Africa, and then the blessing began to come. It has broken out at Rusitu in power, and is continuing to spread all around, and His power is being felt in other parts of the country also. We see, in the July PIONEER, how God was working in Africa during our Week of Prayer at home in March, and though our friends out there did not know we were praying specially that week, yet they were receiving answers *during those days*, God the Holy Ghost putting into the hearts of His people there and here the desires for those things which He was purposing to give in response to the prayer of faith. Are not these facts encouragements to us all to “continue instant in prayer,” and will not God continue to show us His “greater things,” not alone in Gazaland, but right throughout South Africa? The little flames that are already alight in different centres may by our prayers be fanned into

a mighty blaze. "Hear the Word of the Lord, Behold I will kindle a fire . . . the flame shall not be quenched . . . from the North to the South . . . and all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it : it shall not be quenched." Let us see to it that we do not fail Him, but that by "prayer and effort and giving" we prove ourselves to be true "Home-Helpers" as never before, and we shall have the hundredfold of joy in learning of the conversion of the heathen and the preparation of the Christians for the speedy coming of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"He is counting on you"—

On a love that will share
In His burden of prayer
For the souls He has bought
With His Life-blood, and sought
Through His sorrow and pain
To win "Home" yet again.
He is counting on you ;
If you fail Him—what then ?

BESSIE PORTER HEAD.

South Africa General Mission.

"THE HOME-HELPERS' UNION."

Motto: "A little one shall become a thousand." Is. lx. 22.

For the furtherance of the Gospel in South Africa by means of

1 PRAYER. 2. EFFORT. 3. GIVING

on the part of those who must remain at home.

Having read the "Suggestions to Members" and being earnestly desirous of helping forward the Lord's work in South Africa to the best of my ability, I wish to become a member of the "Home-Helpers' Union," and shall be glad (a) to receive a box,

(b) to send a half-yearly gift.


Please read the back and cross out either (a) or (b) according to selection.

Name
(Rev., Mr., Mrs., Miss)

Full Address
To the Secretary,
"Home-Helpers' Union,"
17, Homefield Road,
Wimbledon, S.W.

Date 191

N.B.—A registration gift of 6d. (to meet cost of box, membership card, etc.) and a yearly subscription of 1s. (to cover cost of magazine) are welcomed, but are both entirely optional.

 This form should be detached, and, after being filled up, should be sent to the Secretary of the H.H.U.

A Card of Membership and, when required, a small Missionary Box will be furnished as soon as possible after the receipt of the above duly filled in.

From "Advance in Gazaland."

"THE HOME-HELPERS' UNION"

of the S.A.G.M.

"The wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad for them."—Is. xxxv. 1.

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened."—Is. xxxv. 5.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart."—Is. xxxv. 6.

Suggestions to Members.

I. PRAYER. The needs of South Africa should be daily remembered before God, and the monthly cycle of prayer followed. Members should keep themselves fully acquainted with the progress of the work as recorded in the "South African Pioneer," a copy of which will be sent to them each month.

II. EFFORT. Information regarding the work might be spread by the distribution of the magazines and the literature issued by the Mission and efforts might be made to induce others to join the Union. Where possible, members should form or join bands for Missionary study.

III. GIVING. A South Africa Missionary box will be sent, intended not so much for collecting from others as for one's own regular gifts, personal self-denial and thank-offering; this might be placed on the dressing-table and thus serve as a constant reminder. Should members prefer, instead of using a box, to send a half-yearly gift on April 15th and October 15th, they are asked kindly to state this, in filling up their form.

"The heathen shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes"—Ezekiel xxxvi. 23.

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